**Internship in Marketing and Sales. HR.**

**Malta**

I’m currently starting my final year of English Studies (Master), having accomplished the obligatory internship abroad in terms of the Intercultural Project. Here are some lines about the traineeship I did and the general impressions on my time abroad.

LMU English Studies Program requires a long-term stay in an English speaking country which leaves quite a few options like doing one or two semesters in another educational establishment abroad, volunteering or internship. I have been a student for a considerable period of my life now and this break from the University routine in Germany seemed like a nice chance to do something else and get experience in another field. At the end of Winter Semester 2016 I started looking for interesting internship offers for the next six months or so. I intended to take a semester leave in order to do this traineeship properly and to have more options (since most of the employers offer internships for 3 months and longer). On the University web-site* I came across a promising job offer from Plevna Hotel (situated in Sliema, Malta) inviting students to undergo a traineeship in the Marketing and Sales.HR Department of Hotel’s Head Office. Malta seemed like a reasonable choice to me, not only due to its fantastic bays and exotic views, but also because of the position suggested (for I had already been familiar with the hospitality business and the Marketing and Sales job would let me take a look at the hotel enterprise from yet another perspective), duration of the traineeship – 4 months, and the time period – from the 1st of May till the 26th of August 2016 suited me perfectly. Shortly after I had applied (the internship offer contained the application requirements and corresponding E-mail address) I was contacted by an HR representative of the Office. One Skype interview and two weeks later I became a soon-to-be intern of Hotel Plevna.

* [http://www.s-a.uni-muenchen.de/studierende/jobboerse/praktika_ausland/index.html](http://www.s-a.uni-muenchen.de/studierende/jobboerse/praktika_ausland/index.html)
To be honest I did not have too many expectations partially because I was still pretty much preoccupied with the paper work I had to manage before my departure, partially because this was no first travel abroad for me and judging from the experience it is better to hold one’s horses and wait for the thing to happen first and then see what we can make of it.

There was no need for me to do any additional English language or business course, neither had I any anxiety because of the fact that I was about to spend 4 months in a completely new place and work with people of different nationalities. Naturally, I had to arm myself with the basic knowledge of Malta and its culture before I left Germany, but when the time came for me to leave the island I had impressions, pieces of advice, invitations and tales from Portugal, France, Italy, Spain, China and Korea to take with me.

Plevna is a middle-sized family hotel, one piece of the broad holding, run and owned by Family Bugeja. They take interns all the year round for positions in two fields: the Head Office and the Hotel. The trainees for the Hotel can apply for a job in the Bar and Restaurant as waiters or at the Reception; those at the Head Office can do Marketing and Sales which covers the management of rooms reservations, Social Media - hotel’s website, Facebook and Instagram accounts’ management and the work with reviews and Marketing and Sales. HR which means recruiting of new interns and management of company’s property in Switzerland and Nice. One can apply for any of the positions depending on the interests and qualifications of the person and the time period of their availability. M&S. HR seemed most alluring to me because of the recruiting part and because it was a classic office job with usual working hours (from 8.30a.m. till 5 p.m.) and free weekends.

My main tasks were as follows:

- the search for new interns for all positions via sending out the internship offers to different European educational establishments and working with online job platforms;
- the supervision of the applications, involving correspondence with the applicants, scheduling and conducting Skype interviews, preparation of the internship agreements;
- taking care of the newcomers:
arranging the transfer from the airport to the hotel, meeting them personally,
introducing to the stuff, showing around the town;

- helping out with managing the Ski resort in the Swiss Alps:
taking care of the new bookings,
correspondence with the real estate agents in Switzerland and clients,
payment supervision;

- launching and managing a new booking.com profile for the penthouse in
  Nice, correspondence with the real estate agency on site, taking care of the
  first bookings.

The necessary correspondence with the agents in Switzerland let me train my
German (apart from the other skills gained), though everything else went in the
English regime. The job proved to be a good choice indeed: it demanded certain
creativity, plenty of communication, place for self-education (especially the real
estate part) and -challenge and the thrill one gets when starting something
completely new and different. Interestingly, the office trainees do not get a tutor
to teach them how to do things properly (or how they do it at Plevna), the
internship functions on the relay-race bases which means that by the time a trainee
is approaching the end of the internship a new one arrives and they work together
for some time so that the “old” can hand over the business and the knowledge to
the “new”. Such approach has its pros and cons and it does make the life of the
managers much easier since, though still helping the interns, they do not have to
“play teachers”, personally, I found it all right because we were treated like adults,
colleagues who can work independently, besides it contributed to the development
of friendship between the trainees. Another thing that greatly contributed to that
was the shared accommodation, provided by the hotel. All trainees lived in one
big apartment with 5 bedrooms (to be shared), 2 living rooms, 2 bathrooms, a
kitchen and balcony. The flat: old Mediterranean style with the high ceilings and
thick stone walls as well as the atmosphere in it were amazing! There was not
always enough space or privacy, but there was life, trust, fun, fellowship.
A couple of words about the island: Malta is warm and it attracts people with warm hearts. I have met many interesting people who once came to Malta and decided to settle there for life, one of the interns for the restaurant, two weeks after he had finished the traineeship, came back with all his belongings and is now a happy resident of Malta (which I cannot help but envy). Malta is unique, it is Europe, yet very different from it, it has a lot from Italian culture (especially cuisine), it is supposed to be full of British heritage, yet the Catholic churches look really out of place in the dry exotic locations, crammed between low spacious eastern style houses.

All in all I have greatly enjoyed my traineeship in Malta. I was quite content with my job and accommodation, the problems I had were the usual difficulties of a newcomer that went away with time and these 4 months became a great time that, among the other things, once again gave me the chance to experience, admire and respect another culture.